

# OFFICE OF PLANNING STATE OF HAWAII

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DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR

MARY ALICE EVANS  
DIRECTOR  
OFFICE OF PLANNING

Statement of  
**MARY ALICE EVANS**  
Director, Office of Planning  
before the  
**SENATE COMMITTEES ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND  
TOURISM, AND  
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT**

Friday, February 12, 2021  
3:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224

in consideration of  
**SB 167**  
**RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN.**

Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Misalucha and Nishihara, and Members of the Senate Committees:

The Office of Planning (OP) **strongly supports** SB 167. The Office of Planning supports the integration of green infrastructure and incorporating vegetation, trees, and sustainable green design in the Hawai'i State Planning Act, Chapter 226, Hawai'i Revised Statutes, and public infrastructure projects to increase overall green space and urban tree canopy throughout Hawai'i.

The Office of Planning is actively working on the sustainable development and climate adaptation of the state to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations of Hawai'i to meet their own needs.

The Office of Planning finds these proposed amendments complimentary to the newly-established Statewide Sustainability Program, as well as with the objectives and responsibilities of the State's Greenhouse Gas Sequestration Task Force, which is administratively attached to the Office of Planning, pursuant to [HRS § 225P-4](#). Among other objectives, the Greenhouse Gas Sequestration Task Force is tasked to: *“(5) Identify practices and policies that add trees or vegetation to expand the urban tree canopy in urban areas to reduce ambient temperatures, increase climate resiliency, and improve greenhouse gas sequestration in Hawaii.”* The Greenhouse Gas Sequestration Task Force is also tasked to submit a preliminary report of the task force's findings and recommendations to the Legislature by December 2022.

The Office of Planning appreciates the opportunity to share its strong support of SB 167 to increase Hawai'i's climate resiliency and implement sustainable design practices by improving the availability of green infrastructure, decreasing urban heat, and encouraging greenhouse gas sequestration throughout Hawai'i.

DAVID Y. IGE  
GOVERNOR OF  
HAWAII



SUZANNE D. CASE  
CHAIRPERSON  
BOARD OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

ROBERT K. MASUDA  
FIRST DEPUTY

M. KALEO MANUEL  
DEPUTY DIRECTOR - WATER

AQUATIC RESOURCES  
BOATING AND OCEAN RECREATION  
BUREAU OF CONVEYANCES  
COMMISSION ON WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT  
CONSERVATION AND COASTAL LANDS  
CONSERVATION AND RESOURCES ENFORCEMENT  
ENGINEERING  
FORESTRY AND WILDLIFE  
HISTORIC PRESERVATION  
KAHOOLAWE ISLAND RESERVE COMMISSION  
LAND  
STATE PARKS

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES

POST OFFICE BOX 621  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96809

Testimony of  
SUZANNE D. CASE  
Chairperson

Before the Senate Committees on  
ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM  
and  
AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT

Friday, February 12, 2021  
3:00 PM

State Capitol, Conference Room 224

In consideration of  
SENATE BILL 167  
RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN

Senate Bill 167 proposes to establish green infrastructure priority guidelines within the State Plan to improve the quality of life for residents and visitors by increasing outdoor public green spaces, connecting outdoor public green spaces with existing trails, and increasing urban tree canopy as objectives and policies for the environment. The bill also proposes to require the Office of Planning, in partnership with the Greenhouse Gas Sequestration Task Force, to submit a report to the Legislature making recommendations for implementing the green infrastructure priority guidelines established by this measure. **The Department of Land and Natural Resources (Department) supports this measure.**

The mission of the Department's Kaulunani Urban and Community Forestry Program is to "support all of Hawaii's communities to cultivate wellbeing and resilience through planting, caring for and growing relationships with the trees and forests that we live with and that are crucial to the ecosystems on which we rely. We do this for our keiki, our kūpuna, ourselves, our 'āina and everyone's future." The Kaulunani Program builds capacity in our communities to plan for, establish, manage, and protect all manner of green infrastructure including street-trees, urban forests, green spaces, bioswales and related natural areas where we live, work, and play. The urban tree canopy is declining, and with it, the benefits provided by urban green infrastructure. This measure would help reverse that trend. The Department encourages collaboration with the Office of Planning on this topic.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this measure.

**SB-167**

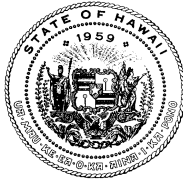
Submitted on: 2/11/2021 8:51:45 AM

Testimony for EET on 2/12/2021 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Heather McMillen	Testifying for DLNR	Support	No

Comments:

I am available for questions. Please allow me Zoom access. Thank you.



STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
P. O. Box 3378  
Honolulu, HI 96801-3378  
doh.testimony@doh.hawaii.gov

WRITTEN  
TESTIMONY ONLY

**Testimony in SUPPORT of SB0167  
RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN**

Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair  
Senator Bennette E. Misalucha, Vice Chair  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON ENERGY, ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT, AND TOURISM

Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair  
SENATE COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENT  
Hearing Date: 2/12/2021 Room Number: 224

- 1 **Fiscal Implications:** This measure is unlikely to impact the priorities identified in the
- 2 Governor's Executive Budget Request for the Department of Health's (Department)
- 3 appropriations.
- 4 **Department Testimony:** SB0167 seeks to establish objectives and policies to increase Hawaii's
- 5 green infrastructure. The Department supports this measure and has the following comments.
- 6 The Department recognizes that the changing climate is a worldwide environmental health
- 7 problem that directly impacts the health and safety of Hawaii's people, communities, and natural
- 8 environment. Potential human health effects resulting from climate change are broad reaching
- 9 and include dangers from increased natural disasters and flooding, changing vector-borne
- 10 infectious diseases and food related infections, as well as impacts on mental health and
- 11 well-being. Our natural environment is also affected by climate change, with negative impacts on
- 12 air and water quality, changing conditions at sites with chemical contamination and disruption of
- 13 shorelines and beaches.
- 14 Increasing green infrastructure will have positive effects on the health of the people of Hawaii by
- 15 helping to reduce the health impacts of climate change. In particular, implementation of the
- 16 projects in this measure are likely to improve air quality, reduce heat related illness, and decrease

- 1 psycho-social stressors. Efforts to mitigate the health risks from climate change will help Hawaii
- 2 adapt to the effects of climate change and help keep our citizens safe and healthy.
- 3 **Offered Amendments:** None
- 4 Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



**SB167**

**RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN**

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ke Ikehu, ka Ho‘omohala Waiwai, a me ka ‘Oihana Ho‘okipa  
Malihini

Ke Kōmike ‘Aha Kenekoa o ka ‘Oihana Mahi‘ai a me ke Ao Kūlohelohe

Pepeluali 12, 2021

3:00 p.m.

Lumi 224

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The Office of Hawaiian Affairs (OHA) **SUPPORTS** SB167, which seeks to improve the quality of life for Hawai‘i residents by amending the State Planning Act to establish green infrastructure objectives and policies for state facilities. **OHA supports the efforts made to incorporate the use of green infrastructure for state facility systems, particularly with the inclusion and integration of native and Hawaiian plants that reflect Hawai‘i’s unique cultural and ecological heritage.**

Native Hawaiian culture is intimately tied to the land and its resources. Historically, each island, moku, and ahupua‘a supported varied and diverse plant life. Such plants were and continue to be essential to perpetuating place-based Native Hawaiian traditional and customary practices, as well as Native Hawaiian traditional knowledge. The connection between Native Hawaiian culture and Hawai‘i’s plant life is also evident in other forms: from place names based on regional flora (e.g., ‘Aiea, Hau‘ula, Kapālama), to mo‘olelo (e.g., ‘Ōhi‘a and Lehua), chants (e.g., the Kumulipo), and hula relating to and inspired by Native Hawaiian plants. **Accordingly, the increased presence of Native Hawaiian plants in the development of “green infrastructure” projects will ensure that our cultural heritage is reflected in our public spaces, educating both residents and visitors as to the value and significance of our islands’ flora while also providing the environmental and health benefits realized from such projects.**

In addition, the increased use of Native Hawaiian plants in green infrastructure projects will help to reverse the rapid decline of these ecologically important species, as well as other native life that may depend upon them. The displacement and decline of Native Hawaiian plants, which have been integrated in our islands’ ecological landscape for hundreds if not thousands of years, have contributed significantly to Hawai‘i’s reputation as the “endangered species capitol of the world.” More than 270 of Hawai‘i’s plant species are now considered threatened or endangered; native animal species have also declined due to the lack of food and habitat historically provided by such plants. As an advocate for our Native Hawaiian beneficiaries, OHA recognizes that the extinction of plant species can result in the extinction of associated traditional and customary practices and indigenous knowledge that have been passed down for millennia. Increasing the use of Native Hawaiian plants in public landscaping projects can help to reverse this trend, both directly, and also through the development of Native Hawaiian plant nurseries and

maintenance practices, and greater local knowledge of Native Hawaiian plants' ecological importance.

Accordingly, OHA urges the Committees to **PASS** SB167. Mahalo nui for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



To: The Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism  
and  
The Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
From: Sherry Pollack, Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org  
Date: Friday, February 12, 2021, 3pm

**In strong support of SB167**

Aloha Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Misalucha and Nishihara, and members of the EET and AEN committees,

I am Co-Founder of the Hawaii chapter of 350.org, the largest international organization dedicated to fighting climate change. 350Hawaii.org strongly supports **SB167**.

This bill would amend the State Plan to include green infrastructure in state facilities and increase the urban tree canopy. Urban trees improve air quality, cool local air temperatures, filter and retain storm water, sequester carbon, and contribute to healthier and more beautiful communities. Efforts to reduce our environmental footprint and improve quality of life are a win:win for everyone and need to be supported.

This Bill will set the stage for all public projects in Hawaii to plan for green infrastructure from the start, thus maximizing benefits and minimizing costs.

Mahalo for the opportunity to testify in **strong support** of this important legislation.

Sherry Pollack  
Co-Founder, 350Hawaii.org



**SB-167**

Submitted on: 2/8/2021 10:42:10 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/12/2021 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Fern Anuenue Holland	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

My 'ohana and I strongly support this bill. Mahalo Senators!

**SB-167**

Submitted on: 2/10/2021 3:25:43 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/12/2021 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ruta Jordans	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

Making objective steps for achieving a green infrastrucure is imperative. Please support.

**LATE**

**SB-167**

Submitted on: 2/11/2021 10:50:28 PM

Testimony for EET on 2/12/2021 3:00:00 PM

<b>Submitted By</b>	<b>Organization</b>	<b>Testifier Position</b>	<b>Present at Hearing</b>
Ted Bohlen	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

**Strong support!** Green infrastructure planning is critical for the State.

**LATE**



## Environmental Caucus of The Democratic Party of Hawai'i

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To: Senate Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism  
Senator Glenn Wakai, Chair  
Senator Bennette E. Misalucha, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the Committee on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism

Senate Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
Senator Mike Gabbard, Chair  
Senator Clarence K. Nishihara, Vice Chair, and  
Members of the Committee on Agriculture and Environment

Re: SB 167 – RELATING TO THE STATE PLAN

Meeting: Friday, February 12, 2021, 3:00 p.m., room 224 via videoconference

Position: **STRONG SUPPORT**

Aloha Chairs Wakai and Gabbard, Vice Chairs Misalucha and Nishihara, and Members of the Committees on Energy, Economic Development and Tourism; and Agriculture and Environment:

The Environmental Caucus of the Democratic Party of Hawaii stands in strong support of SB 167 as it is designed to improve the quality of life in the State by: (1) establishing objectives and policies for state facility systems in the Hawaii State Planning Act to achieve the use of green infrastructure, vegetation, and trees in state facility systems, infrastructure, and transit projects; and (2) requiring the office of planning, in partnership with the greenhouse gas sequestration task force, to make recommendations for implementing the green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines established under the Act.

The Democratic Party of Hawai'i (Party) has adopted at its State Convention in 2018, clear safeguards for our community against the climate crisis found in pages 5-6 of the Party Platform:

### **“BUILDING A 21<sup>ST</sup> CENTURY INFRASTRUCTURE**

We will protect communities from the impact of climate change and help to mitigate its effects in investing in green and resilient infrastructure.”

As an island State, Hawaii is among the first places harmed by the climate crisis, with more intense storms, loss of protective coral reefs, food insecurity, and rising sea levels destroying our shorelines.

Evidence of the climate crisis was felt in the Hawaiian Islands through the loss of East Island a little over two years ago. A piece of the United States has been dramatically wiped off the map after an island in [Hawaii](#) was washed away by a powerful hurricane. East Island, a remote spit of

Chair Glen Wakai  
Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism  
Chair Mike Gabbard  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
February 12, 2021  
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gravel and sand that sat atop a coral reef, has vanished after having this misfortune to come into contact with Hurricane Walaka, an intense storm that surged past Hawaii in October 2018.

East Island played an important role for wildlife, including the critically endangered Hawaiian monk seal, a species that numbers just 1,400 individuals, with many of the seals raising their young on East Island. Green sea turtles, which are also threatened, and seabirds such as albatrosses, which often had their young preyed upon by circling tiger sharks, also depended on the island.

If conditions align, atolls would always be at risk of being erased by a powerful hurricane. But climate change is causing the ocean and atmosphere to warm, making storms fiercer, while there's evidence that hurricanes are moving further north into the latitudes where East Island once lay.

Rising sea levels are also eroding away low-lying islands, with several fragments of land in the [Pacific vanishing in recent years](#). *See*, [Hawaiian island erased by powerful hurricane: 'The loss is a huge blow' | Hawaii | The Guardian](#)

Scientists have made it very clear that we are part of the last generation that can stop or at least mitigate the devastating impacts of climate change. Hawaii can and should be a leader in showing the world the way forward towards a safe and sustainable climate and future.

The Party Platform on page 19 describes a way forward and this measure is another step forward for the State, the Pacific, and the World toward our sustainable climate and future:

## **“CONFRONT GLOBAL THREATS AND GLOBAL CLIMATE LEADERSHIP**

Climate change poses an urgent and severe threat to our National Security, and the Party believes it would be a grave mistake for the United States to wait for another nation to take the lead in combating the global climate emergency. According to the U.S. military, climate change is a threat multiplier that is already contributing to new conflicts over resources, catastrophic natural disasters, and the degradation of vital ecosystems across the globe. The Party recognizes the catastrophic consequences facing our State, our country, our planet, and civilization.

We believe that Hawai‘i must lead in forging a robust global solution to the climate crisis. We are committed to a national mobilization, and to leading a global effort to mobilize nations to address this threat. Our generation must lead the fight against climate change and we applaud Hawai‘i’s leadership in joining the historic Paris Climate Accord. We will not only meet the goals set in Paris, we will seek to exceed them and push other countries to do the same by slashing carbon pollution and rapidly driving down emissions of potent greenhouse gases like hydrofluorocarbons. We will support other States and developing countries in their efforts to mitigate carbon pollution and other greenhouse gases, deploy more clean energy, and invest in climate resilience and adaptation.”

Chair Glen Wakai  
Committee on Energy, Economic Development, and Tourism  
Chair Mike Gabbard  
Committee on Agriculture and Environment  
February 12, 2021  
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This measure encourages building green infrastructure by following these sustainability design objectives: (1) minimizing stormwater runoff and replenishing the water table; (2) reducing the urban heat-island effect; (3) encouraging the removal of pollutants from the air; and (4) encouraging the removal, sequestration, and storage of greenhouse gas emissions.

For these reasons, we urge you to pass this bill as it (1) establishes objectives and policies for state facility systems in the Hawaii State Planning Act to achieve the use of green infrastructure, vegetation, and trees in state facility systems, infrastructure, and transit projects; and (2) requires the office of planning, in partnership with the greenhouse gas sequestration task force, to make recommendations for implementing the green infrastructure objectives, policies, and priority guidelines established under the Act.

Mahalo for this opportunity to testify,

/s/ **Melodie Aduja**

Melodie Aduja  
Co-Chair, Environmental Caucus  
Democratic Party of Hawai`i